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Dear Carol

At the meeting of the Academy Patient/Lay Group on 28 January, 2009 the chairmen of the college and faculty PLGs who were present discussed concerns about the effect of the implementation of the EWTD. I was asked to write to you in order to express the patient and lay views they would wish to make known.

Firstly, it was the strongly held view that the primary aim of compliance with the Directive should be to optimise patient care, both in the short term and in the future. This goes beyond considerations of "patient safety". A patient may be "safe" but suffer disadvantage from delayed treatment and recovery if the overall time worked by skilled doctors is reduced by too much, too quickly. In some cases, the methods by which compliance is achieved may be to the net detriment of patient care. Continuity of care and safe handover are two particular concerns for patients and their carers.

Secondly, the potential impact on training, especially in some specialities, should not pose a threat to future standards or quality of care. We do recognise that the stated objective of the Directive is to improve patient safety through the avoidance of over-tiredness but the unintended consequence of this should not be inadequate training or experience amongst the doctors of the future.

We hope that the plans for future compliance will be made with these patient concerns at the forefront and that the necessary resources will be made available.

Yours,



Barbara Wood
Chairman,
The Academy Patient/Lay Group